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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Agricultural Marketing Administration

ON THE HOME FRONT *With* AMA Food Programs

HOW DO AMA'S DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS ON THE HOME FRONT DOVETAIL WITH THE \$5,000,000 A DAY LEND-LEASE FOOD PURCHASES?

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WHAT IS THE PLACE OF THE FOOD STAMP, SCHOOL LUNCH, DIRECT DISTRIBUTION OF FOOD, AND THE PENNY MILK PROGRAMS IN THE WAR EFFORT?

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HOW DO THESE PROGRAMS AID THE FARMER AND THE CONSUMER, AND HOW DO THEY CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEFEAT OF THE ENEMY?

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"FOOD WILL WIN THE WAR" IS THE MILITANT CRY THAT ECHOES OVER AMERICAN FARMS -- FARMS GEARED FOR BATTLE.

"FOOD WILL WRITE THE PEACE" IS THE RESOUNDING CALL OF HOPE THAT WILL BE HEARD BY A HUNGRY WORLD WHEN THE SOLDIERS HAVE COME HOME FROM THE WARS.

TODAY THE FULL ENERGY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE IS DEDICATED TO THE IMMEDIATE JOB OF WINNING THE WAR -- WINNING IT BY THE ABUNDANT PRODUCTION AND STRATEGIC DISTRIBUTION OF HUGE QUANTITIES OF FOOD.

PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION -- THESE ARE THE TWO POWERFUL BRANCHES OF SERVICE ON THE FOOD FRONT. THEY ARE DEPENDENT ONE ON THE OTHER. ONE ALONE IS POWERLESS.

THE FARMER MUST GROW CROPS TO THE LIMITS OF THE CAPACITY OF HIS LAND AND LABOR.

THE MACHINERY OF MARKETING TAKES THE PRODUCE FROM THE FARMER AT A PRICE THAT WILL ENABLE HIM TO CONTINUE TO PRODUCE. IT PROCESSES, TRANSPORTS, AND DELIVERS THIS FOOD TO THE PLACES WHERE IT IS NEEDED. THE PRODUCER STARTS THE JOB -- THE DISTRIBUTOR FINISHES IT.

THE WORK OF THE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING ADMINISTRATION IS TO FINISH THE WAR JOB THE FARMER STARTED ON THE SOIL.

The Agricultural Marketing Administration is today, both in scope and volume, the greatest food-buying and food-distributing agency the world has ever known.

It has the gigantic task of seeing that there is no waste of the products of the soil, and no waste of human beings because of lack of such products.

The AMA, through its purchases of Lend-Lease foods for the United Nations (now at a rate exceeding \$5,000,000 a day), its operation of the Food Stamp and School Milk programs, its part in school lunches, its purchases of food for direct distribution to needy families, and its Victory Food Specials, covers the food front at home and in all distant lands where the force of food can fight the Axis.

It must supply this food in a form that will both preserve it and save shipping space. It must supply it in the kind that can be used by people accustomed to varied food tastes.

It must, through its distribution programs and marketing services, aid in supplying food to every man, woman, and child in our own country. For there can be no hunger, carrying in its wake large groups of people weakened in body and morale, if the full force of the Nation's physical power is to be thrown into the war effort.

It works hand in glove with the production goals. By preventing distribution breakdowns, it prevents farm discouragement, underpins farm prices, and encourages the production of vitally needed foods to lick the aggressors.

HITTING A BALANCE

Farmers, by their magnificent response to Secretary Wickard's call for all-out production of war crops, are attaining the production goals. These goals were based upon anticipated demand of the armed forces and war-torn civilians of the United Nations.

The job of the AMA is to strike a balance between farm production and the needs of war. To understand how the AMA balances these needs against production it is necessary to cover problems of the home front, the farm front, and the battle front.

How do these problems affect the farmers' income and the dinner tables of our country? What are the obstacles and what part does AMA play in overcoming them?

HOW NATIONS SHOP FOR FOOD TO WIN A WAR

When the United Nations come to the vast American food counter banked with this year's all-time record farm production they hold in their hands shopping lists made up from day to day -- lists altered to meet the shifting and unforeseeable fortunes of war. AMA does not know today what tomorrow's orders from the United Nations will be.

But because farmers have met their production goals, AMA can fill those orders.

Now, here comes another problem. These all-out production goals were designed to meet all demands. But because of the varied demands of war there may be great call for one group of items and little call for other foods all of which are available. There will be tight squeezes on some items and seasonal or regional abundance of others. Because waste in war is intolerable all foods must be used, and to the best advantage.

TOO MUCH AND TOO SOON

A host of other factors born of war, ever changing, must be dealt with from day to day to keep food flowing so there will be no waste.

When the torpedo of an enemy submarine explodes in the hold of a cargo ship its repercussions are felt on the farms and in the kitchens of our country. For each time a ship goes to the bottom, unless it is immediately replaced, it means one less ship to carry food already purchased and stored for shipment abroad. Because vast quantities must be bought, processed, and warehoused, ready for the most optimistic estimation of shipping space, sinkings can cause this food to accumulate. When warehouses and processing plants are taxed to the limit there can be an accumulation of food on the farm which must be moved through every available channel unless there is to be waste.

When the Japanese took over the tin mines of the East Indies, another far-away event, it was felt on the home food front. Tin is not available in sufficient quantities to pack all the food needed for war use abroad and at the same time supply the housewife with her accustomed stores of canned goods. This shortage of material is felt in turn by the farmer who produces truck crops for canning in areas where there may not be adequate processing facilities to care for his perishable products. These must reach market if we are not to have needed food rotting in the fields. They must be moved lest the farmer suffer loss of his year's investment in labor and people go hungry somewhere because they do not have enough.

Then there is the tire shortage, the truck shortage, the over-taxed rail transportation, the submarine-harassed coastwise shipping, and many other burdens that come with war and bear down and dislocate normal channels of food distribution, all of them contributing to a shortage in some places and to a wasteful abundance in others.

TOO LITTLE AND TOO LATE

On the other hand we have at home millions who need much of the food that we can produce. There are ten million unemployables — the old, the lame, the halt, and the blind — in the United States today. Despite the busy roar of war factories and the call to arms of millions of men, this segment of our population must be cared for. To neglect them threatens the health and morale of the entire group. There are the millions of low-income families whose wages, no matter how hard or long they work, can never provide the minimum nutritional requirements for growth and good health. And there are the children,

-- the coming generation that must work out the peace. We are educating them, training them, and directing them to be the hope for a new and better world. We cannot serve them simply by contributing to their minds and spirits. They must have healthy bodies. Milk and the other protective foods are prime requirements. Without them the youngster of today may become the unemployable of tomorrow. The right food must go hand in hand with public education. This is a wartime, as well as a peacetime, must.

ENOUGH ON TIME

Under the closely knit programs of the AMA are marshalled projects which dovetail to meet the food demands of war abroad and the requirements of all groups at home -- all working toward the end that there be no waste of farm products and no waste of human power for the lack of them.

That's the ABC of today's farm production-distribution problem. Obstacles stand in the way of solving it. The obvious job is to clear these obstacles out of the way as speedily and as effectively as possible so that our ultimate goal -- winning the war -- will not be delayed. On the agricultural front that means simply keeping open all possible channels to the market place in order that production incentives will be sustained for the duration. Domestic distribution programs play an important part in striking the balance between production and war use to the end that there be no waste.

THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM. This service seeks to raise farm income and at the same time to increase the food purchasing power of low-income consumers. Persons certified as eligible by local welfare agencies buy minimum quantities of orange-colored stamps, good in exchange for any foodstuff, and receive free a specified number of blue stamps, good in exchange only for abundant foods designated by the Secretary of Agriculture. Purchases of orange stamps insure that normal expenditures for food will be continued so that foods obtained with free blue stamps will represent a net addition to food consumption.

Today's farm market includes some 3,500,000 persons whose food purchasing power has been increased approximately 50 percent by provisions of the program, now in its fourth year of successful operation. These people live in 47 States, in 13 of which the program operates on a State-wide basis, while in the remainder it operates in some 400 counties and city areas. Their increased food buying power acts as a siphon drawing off the farms millions of pounds of health-building commodities and carrying them through established retail distribution channels to the dinner tables of low-income families throughout the Nation.

THE DIRECT DISTRIBUTION PROGRAM. This service seeks also to increase farm income as well as to improve our nutritional level. But, unlike purchases made at retail stores under the Food Stamp program,

purchases under the Direct Distribution program are made by the Government in carload lots, at farms, or at wholesale points. Commodities are shipped to points designated by State welfare agencies where they are redistributed to families certified as eligible by local welfare agencies in communities in which the Food Stamp program is NOT in operation.

In by-passing the established retail distribution system, the Direct Distribution mechanism frequently accomplishes its purposes with more dispatch than the Food Stamp program. If, for any one of several causes, a seasonal abundance arises, the AMA is able speedily to set in motion its Direct Distribution service, buy up carloads of perishable fruits and vegetables, ship them quickly to consumption points, and thus prevent possible waste and market collapse, with attendant falling prices for farmers, resulting from market glut.

The farm market served by this program now totals upwards of 4,000,000 persons throughout the United States, Hawaii, and Puerto Rico who receive each month more than 100,000,000 pounds of health-building farm commodities.

THE SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM. Millions of children all over the United States -- more than 6,000,000 of them in 93,000 schools in March 1942 -- have received school lunches made up in part of AMA foods. Although large-scale Government distribution of food for school lunches is still a rather new idea, these figures speak for themselves. AMA's part in school feeding is one link in the extensive chain of cooperation responsible for the success of the Nation-wide Community School Lunch program. Important contributions have been made by State welfare agencies, WPA, NYA, PTA, State and city departments of education, home economics teachers, the Extension Service, Farm Security Administration, State and local nutrition committees, civic clubs, and many other agencies and groups, both public and private.

Schools that may receive foods distributed by AMA from State-operated warehouses are certified locally on the basis of eligible children. The many food items furnished by AMA supplement the food provided by the local agency which sponsors the Community School Lunch program. Other foods than those provided by AMA are necessary to make a complete school lunch, high in food value and in palatability. The local sponsor provides these foods, thereby broadening the total farm market. The sponsor also assumes responsibility for establishing the program and providing the equipment, utensils, and dishes necessary for preparing and serving the food. For the most part the lunches are prepared and served in the school, although sometimes a neighborhood church, community house, or other public building with a well-equipped kitchen is used.

THE SUMMER LUNCH PROGRAM. This program, vacation-time counterpart of the School Lunch program, seeks to maintain all that is gained in health improvement during the school year. Comes lunch time, and children are hungry in the summer the same as in the fall, winter, and spring. Many children may have no lunch or at least not a suitable lunch in the summer months unless the school or a recreational

center makes use of every means of providing it without charge. Camps, too, play an important part in the summer feeding of undernourished children. Lacking facilities to serve a complete noon meal, a supplementary feeding of fruit, milk, milk and crackers, or cereal, served on the school or community playground contributes much toward improving the nutritional status of innumerable children.

THE SCHOOL MILK PROGRAM. More milk for more school children, means sound teeth, stronger framework for growing bodies. Millions of youngsters don't drink enough milk; a surprisingly large number don't drink any milk. That's bad enough for them, and it's not doing dairy farmers any good because their product does not reach this huge boy-and-girl market. The School Milk program seeks to bring milk to undernourished children -- in the following manner:

1. The program must be sponsored by a local agency -- school, school authority, Parent-Teacher Association, civic club, or other responsible group -- who will make all negotiations with dairies and provide the limited facilities needed for serving the milk.

2. The sponsor will sign an agreement with the Agricultural Marketing Administration in which the sponsor agrees to purchase and distribute the milk to the children, The AMA agrees to reimburse the sponsor in an amount equal to the farmer's price for Class I unprocessed milk.

3. The sponsor assumes responsibility for all handling costs. To meet them, wholly or partly, the sponsor may charge children not more than a penny a half-pint for the milk. It is expected that the sponsor will arrange to provide milk without charge to children who cannot pay the penny.

At the end of the last school term the program was operating in nearly 100 areas, mostly larger cities. Although there is still great need for the program in other large cities, further expansion will be limited primarily to rural and urban areas not exceeding 10,000 population in order to secure the widest possible coverage and to distribute more equitably available funds among regions and States and various-sized urban and rural centers.

The School Milk program also is a community enterprise. Communities and Government share costs of a democratic and cooperative undertaking in the American tradition. The Nation shares its benefits. A broader market base is built for fluid milk, a broader health base for growing youngsters.

VICTORY FOOD SPECIALS. Another program of the AMA which attacks waste -- that enemy of democracy -- is the Victory Food Special program. It takes the pressure off certain foods when scarcity threatens because of military and United Nations' needs, and stimulates the distribution of foods that are in abundant supply. It aids in maintaining the rate of food production needed to meet expanding wartime requirements and encourages a more effective use of the Nation's total

food supply. By estimating the time and place of flush production, by notifying food distributors in advance of abundant foods to come, and by focusing consumers' attention on them at the time of their appearance on the market, the designated Food Specials are moved onto the tables of the country. Thus the program also aids homemakers in stretching their food dollars so as to provide nutritious meals.

Victory Food Specials, designated by the Administrator of AMA, are identified by a symbol -- a bold V against a market basket filled with foodstuffs.

The phrase "Victory Food Special" is becoming a part of dynamic war phraseology as radio foods commentators, market reporters, announcers, writers, editors, home economists, and nutrition teachers bring it home to the consumers as a guide to wise wartime food buying.

KEEPING THE MARKET HIGHWAY OPEN

A number of farm commodities important to winning the war are seasonally on the domestic consumption program. Both consumer and farmer have benefited by the use made of these foods on domestic distribution programs.

FRUITS. The AMA has purchased millions of dollars' worth of both oranges and grapefruit, primarily as juice, segments, and for processing into pulp.

Notably effective as a scurvy preventive, citrus fruits have been distributed widely through School Lunch programs. They have been staple items listed as available in exchange for blue stamps under the Food Stamp program. Finally, hundreds of carloads of citrus fruits have been distributed to needy families under the Direct Distribution program. These supplementary market outlets have been immeasurably valuable in keeping open roads to the farmer's market place. Without them, citrus growers faced an inevitable fruit pile-up in domestic markets, diminishing income, discouragement -- at a critical period when citrus is playing its part, along with other protective foods, and with planes, tanks, guns, to help lick the Axis.

Some 50,000 apple growers, among others, were hit hard by the war which closed the huge export markets. When the Nation was threatened with a domestic market glut in apples, AMA commodity specialists recommended a substantial purchase program to safeguard grower investment against an impending price collapse. Over a comparatively short period, 10 million bushels of fresh, dried, and canned apples were bought for shipment to the United Nations and distribution to needy families and for School Lunch programs. The "and" is important because Lend-Lease requisitions could not hope to absorb the entire oversupply, and without supplemental School Lunch and Direct Distribution support the purchase program would not have been so successful in underpinning grower prices. Receipts on the entire production of fall apples were increased by as much as 25 cents per bushel according to hard-headed growers who credited the program with averting washout prices in a hopelessly disorganized market.

VEGETABLES--cabbage, tomatoes, beets, carrots, snap beans, fresh peas, others. No large purchases of these commodities were made under the Lend-Lease program in the first 12-month period of its operation. Highly perishable vegetables present almost insurmountable shipping problems, particularly in the face of uncertain transoceanic schedules. But they are nonetheless Food-for-Freedom. We can use them domestically, thus making more of the nonperishable foods available for our armed forces and our allies.

The supplementary markets served by AMA food distribution programs take off the last layers of the fresh vegetable crop--the layers that depress the price on the entire crop, the fifth-column layers that undermine farm morale. Sufficient reason why fresh vegetables are usually among the foods distributed direct to low-income families, to school children, and why there regularly appears on the list of foods obtainable with free blue stamps under the Food Stamp program the item: "All Fresh Vegetables."

GRAIN PRODUCTS. With the greatest supply of cereal crops in history -- wheat, corn, oats, barley -- and an expected large production this season, AMA's buying for Lend-Lease, School Lunch, and Direct Distribution to families, and putting certain cereal products on the Food Stamp list, mean added outlets to farmers. They also mean good nutritious food for our allies, our school children, and for low-income groups. Hundreds of thousands of barrels of cereal products -- whole wheat flour, enriched white flour, ordinary white flour, cornmeal, cornflakes, whole wheat cereal, rolled wheat, and rolled oats -- have been made available for use in school lunches alone.

EGGS AND POULTRY. These products also are playing an important wartime role. Not millions, but billions of dozens of eggs are being produced in the United States. They supply a highly valuable food, not only for use at home, but for our fighting men everywhere and for the armed forces of our allies.

Millions of dozens have been bought by AMA for distribution to low-income families and through School Lunch programs. Eggs also are listed among the foods available to participants in the Food Stamp program and can be obtained at local stores with blue stamps. More millions of dozens of eggs converted into powder are being bought for shipment to our allies under the Lend-Lease program.

With poultry the story is much the same. The increase in poultry production is more or less incidental to increased egg production. But we need the poultry to add to our meat supplies and to supplement pork and beef so vitally needed by our armed forces and by our allies across the seas. AMA purchases for Lend-Lease have included thousands of pounds of canned boned chicken and canned boned turkey. These are for our allies to use in hospitals and convalescent wards where their fighting men or civilians wounded in bombing attacks are being nursed back to health and strength.

On the home front, chickens and turkeys will continue to supply much of the meat protein we need to keep our task forces on the production line turning out weapons destined to defeat the Axis.

DAIRY PRODUCTS. Wartime production goals call for huge quantities of milk for processing into cheese, and into dried skim and whole milk powder for convenient packaging, storing, shipping. Milk is rich in minerals, vitamins, and other food values, and in processed forms is easily transportable and readily adaptable to military uses. To meet the United Nations' needs, farmers are producing vastly more milk than ever before in the history of the dairy industry. But they receive less for the milk that goes into processed forms than they get for fluid milk sold for drinking purposes. It is essential, therefore, that fluid milk markets be kept open in order that a reasonable percentage of the dairy farmers' income will be derived from fluid sales — "pay-off" level for a decent standard of living for the farm family.

To the extent that the School Milk program, popularly called Penny Milk program, becomes established in communities, it provides an addition to the farmer's market for fluid milk, and, importantly today, encourages him to keep milk coming that can be converted into forms urgently needed to win the war. Nor is the problem solved when his fluid milk has been processed for shipping. Recently a supply of evaporated milk backed up into the country when ship schedules were temporarily disturbed. Pressure is being relieved by distributing some of this to thousands of established School Lunch programs and to needy families where the milk is soon used in appetizing dishes high in food value. Dried skim milk, too — millions of pounds of it — has improved the food value of school lunches. And at times butter supplies, becoming burdensome on the market, have been made available to families and for School Lunch programs through AMA purchase and distribution.

THE DUAL JOB

Today's first job on the farm front is to produce enough foods to meet all needs of the United States and the other United Nations, both civilian and military. Today's second job — actually a part of the first — is to see that foods produced are distributed anywhere they are needed throughout the democratic world.

But this can't be done if anything blocks the roads to the market place. The distribution programs of the AMA — Food Stamp, Direct Distribution, School Lunch, School Milk — help clear obstacles out of roads to markets, primary and supplementary, and thereby help farmers to produce food that will win the war and write the peace.



